



Vigilant

The Journal of the 143rd



143rd Composite Squadron, Waterbury, CT

MAY 2012

Squadron Schedule

- 05JUN12 Squadron Meeting**
ES/Safety/Character Dev.
Uniform: BDU/Polo
- 08JUN12 Goshen Stampede**
Goshen, CT
Uniform: BDU
- 12JUN12 Squadron Meeting**
AE
Uniform: BDU/Polo
- 19JUN12 Squadron Meeting**
CPFT/Fitness Activity
Uniform: PT/BDU/Polo
- 23JUN12 CTWG Training Exercise**
Location TBD
Uniform: BDU/Polo
- 23JUN12 PAWG Encampment/RCLS**
Fort Indiantown Gap
Annville, PA
- 26JUN12 Squadron Meeting**
Leadership
Uniform: Blues/Corporate
- 03JUL12 Squadron Meeting**
ES/Safety/Character Dev.
Uniform: BDU/Polo
- 10JUL12 Squadron Meeting**
AE
Uniform: BDU/Polo
- 17JUL12 Squadron Meeting**
CPFT/Fitness Activity
Uniform: PT/BDU/Polo
- 20JUL12 NHWG/VTWG Encampment**
Norwich University
Northfield, VT
- 20JUL12 NYWG Encampment**
Stratton Air National Guard Base
Scotia, NY
- 22JUL12 MAWG Encampment**
Fort Devens
Devens, MA
- 24JUL12 Squadron Meeting**
Leadership
Uniform: Blues/Corporate

Cadets Participate in USAF Exercise



Cadets take a moment to stand in front of the flag in the Base Hangar at Westover Air Reserve Base.

Cadets from the 143rd supported the 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron (ASTS), based at Westover ARB in Chickopee, MA, during an exercise that tested the skills of the 439th medical personnel. Cadets played the part of wounded soldiers with specific injuries that ranged from severe burns and amputations to psychological injuries such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The two day exercise had cadets participating in two separate exercises. The first scenario simulated a mass casualty event near the runway at Westover ARB. Cadets were assigned injuries that airmen from the Exercise Evaluation Team applied moulage treatments and coached the cadets in the symptoms associated with their injury. The 439th ASTS was informed of the location of the exercise and



Above: Cadets simulate a mass casualty event.

Left: USAF medics apply simulated wounds to cadets.

The 143rd Composite Squadron

Squadron Commander: Maj Timothy McCandless
Deputy Commander for Seniors: Lt Col Richard Levitt
Deputy Commander for Cadets: Maj Thomas Litwinczyk
Cadet Commander: C/Lt Col Matthew McCandless
Cadet First Sergeant: C/CMSgt Cameron Foster

Regular Meetings every Tuesday 7-9pm
Connecticut National Guard Armory
64 Field Street, Waterbury, Connecticut

www.gocivilairpatrol.com

quickly set up a field triage. The medics moved the most serious patients to the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility (CASF) that was set up in a nearby hanger. The medics were evaluated on their performance by the Exercise Evaluation Team and reviewed procedures to effectively manage a large number of casualties on short notice.

The second exercise simulated both moving patients onto an aircraft from a CASF and receiving patients from an aircraft to a CASF. Cadets were again assigned specific injuries and the 439th Medics prepared them for air transport.

Many of the 439th ASTS medics have deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq, Germany, Hawaii and other locations in support of US Military Operations and had conducted similar missions with actual patients. These experienced personnel are sometimes required to act as patients for medics preparing to deploy for the first time. Because CAP was able to take on the role of the patients, the experienced Air Force personnel were able to more effectively oversee the exercise and make the most of the training day.

Cadets were loaded on the C-130J aircraft both as stretcher bound patients and as walking wounded.



Air Force Medics set up a triage and prepare to move the wounded.



CBS Channel 3 Springfield speaks with C/Maj Maggie Palys.



The 439th ASTS's Psychologist set up an area to conduct a group therapy session for cadets assigned to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder injuries.

Once the aircraft was loaded it lifted off and flew for almost an hour. This gave the Exercise Evaluation Team enough time to assign new injuries to each cadet, apply moulage as necessary and brief the cadets. There was also enough time for all the cadets to spend some time on the flight deck and talk to the pilots.

Once the aircraft landed the 439th medics off-loaded the cadets into the CASF, re-evaluated their injuries and performed immediate actions as necessary. The exercise was set up to allow training for the entire squadron including psychological injuries and even morgue and Chaplain Assistant functions.

In addition to the exercises that involved the cadets the 439th ASTS conducted a medical evacuation exercise using a Blackhawk helicopter. The helicopter evacuation included practicing administering an IV to the patients, so the cadets did not participate in that training.

The members of the 143rd Composite Squadron were very proud to help make this training exercise a success. While CAP often makes requests for support from the Air Force it is a special privilege when we are able to return the favor.



Cadets requiring stretchers were lined up in the CASF in preparation for being loaded into the C-130J.



The walking wounded are escorted to the aircraft.



A Chaplain's Assistant conducts a field service for C/SSgt Moran who was moved to the morgue area of the CASF.



2nd Lt Kelley Foster experiences her first Military Airlift flight with her son, C/CMSgt Cameron Foster.



Cadets (l. to r.) C/SMsGt Devin Moore, C/2nd Lt Thaddaeus Vaichus, C/SMsGt Alec Beliveau and C/SSgt Sarah Eriksson took a turn visiting the flight deck during flight and meet the pilots from the 143rd Airlift Wing (Rhode Island Air National Guard).



Stretchers are set in place in preparation for take off.



Cadets wait to be assigned new injuries on the C-130J during flight.



Cadets enjoyed a pizza lunch on the picnic deck near the flight line at Westover ARB.



C/Lt Col Matthew McCandless with his parents.



C/2nd Lt Drew Grosf with his parents.



Cadet Carlos Aponte is promoted to C/TSgt by Maj McCandless.



Cadet Sarah Eriksson is promoted to C/SSgt by Maj McCandless.



Cadet Celine Abassi is promoted to C/SrA by her mother, 2nd Lt Lisa Abassi.



C/Capt Midhat Mullai is presented his Earhart Award Certificate by Maj McCandless.



C/SMSgt Devin Moore and his grandmother (left) and C/SMSgt Alec Beliveau and his father (right).



Maj Litwinczyk (l.) and Maj McCandless (r.) promote Cadet Matthew McCarthy-Calabrese to C/TSgt.



Cadet Christain Tynan is promoted to C/SSgt by his uncle, USMC Lance Corporal Tynan.



Cadets Nicole Crowe (center left) and Kristina Delp (center right) are promoted to C/Amn by Maj McCandless (l.) and C/Capt Testman (r.).

May Promotions

The following members of the 143rd Composite Squadron were promoted in May:



Lisa Abassi has been promoted to 2nd Lt. This promotion requires completion of Level I of the Senior Member program and six months time in grade as a Senior Member.



Kelly Foster has been promoted to 2nd Lt. This promotion requires completion of Level I of the Senior Member program and six months time in grade as a Senior Member.



Matthew McCandless has completed the Eaker Award and has been promoted to C/Lt Col.



Drew Grosf has completed the Billy Mitchell Achievement and has been promoted to C/2nd Lt.



Alec Beliveau has completed the Gen Jimmy Doolittle Achievement and has been promoted to C/SMSgt.



Devin Moore has completed the Gen Jimmy Doolittle Achievement and has been promoted to C/SMSgt.



Carlos Aponte has completed the Capt Eddie Rickenbacker Achievement and has been promoted to C/TSgt.



Matthew McCarthy-Calabrese has completed the Capt Eddie Rickenbacker Achievement and has been promoted to C/TSgt.



Sarah Eriksson has completed the Wright Brothers Achievement and has been promoted to C/SSgt.



Christain Tynan has completed the Wright Brothers Achievement and has been promoted to C/SSgt.



Celine Abassi has completed the Mary Feik Achievement and has been promoted to C/SrA.



Nicole Crowe has completed the Gen J F Curry Achievement and has been promoted to C/Amn.



Kristina Delp has completed the Gen J F Curry Achievement and has been promoted to C/Amn.



Matthew DiBlanda has completed the Gen J F Curry Achievement and has been promoted to C/Amn.

Aircrew Awarded Commander's Commendation

During a routine ferry flight in March, members of the 143rd spotted a forest fire in Prospect, CT. They quickly reported the fire and circled the area to report the rate at which the fire was spreading.

Because they were not flying as part of an authorized Search & Rescue Mission, they are not eligible for a Search & Rescue Find Award. The Connecticut Wing Commander, Col Cassandra Huchko, agreed that their actions do deserve special recognition. For their actions the three members of the aircrew, Capt Daniel Hanle, 2nd Lt James Keaney and C/SMSgt Devin Moore are awarded the Commander's Commendation Award.



Maj. McCandless presents C/SMSgt Devon Moore (center) and 2nd Lt James Keaney with Commander Commendation Awards.



General Ira C. Eaker Award



This award marks completion of Phase IV of the Cadet Program, "The Executive Phase." This phase involves five achievements: leadership officer, aerospace education officer, operations officer, logistics officer, and cadet commander.

The General Ira C. Eaker Award denotes successful completion of all sixteen achievements and four phases of the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program. While this award recognizes cadet completion of the academic, leadership, moral leadership and physical fitness curriculum in existence since 1964, this award was established by the National Board in 1995.

This award honors the late Air Force General Ira C. Eaker, aviation pioneer, career military officer and one of the chief architects and visionaries of the US Air Force.



May Awards

The following members of the 143rd Composite Squadron were earned awards in May:

Alan Hinkson has been awarded the Red Service Ribbon for two years of service to CAP.



Matthew McCandless has been awarded the Community Service Ribbon for sixty hours of community service.



Christain Tynan has been awarded the Cadet Recruiting Ribbon for recruiting four new members.



Alec Beliveau has been awarded the Cadet Recruiting Ribbon for recruiting two new members.



Megan Major has been awarded the Cadet Recruiting Ribbon for recruiting two new members.



Cadets (l. to r.) C/SMSgt Alec Beliveau, C/CMSgt Megan Major and C/SSgt Christain Tynan report to Maj. McCandless to be presented the Cadet Recruiter Ribbon.

Ground Team Members Earn Find Award

The Search & Rescue Find Award is given by the wing commander to any CAP member of the wing making a find (distress or non-distress) on a search and rescue mission.

The 143rd Composite Squadron located a non-distress ELT signal at the Waterbury-Oxford Airport in April. The team included seven members who were awarded their first non-distress Find Award and therefore are now authorized to wear Search & Rescue Find Ribbon. Those members are:

Alec Beliveau • Paul Beliveau
Drew Grosof • Alan Hinkson
James Keaney • Devin Moore
Midhat Mullai



Ground Team Members (left to right) C/SMSgt Devon Moore, C/SMSgt Alec Beliveau, C/Capt Midhat Mullai, C/2nd Lt Drew Grosof, 2nd Lt James Keaney and 2nd Lt Paul Beliveau are awarded the Search & Rescue Find Award.

143rd Open House

On May 28th the squadron held an Open House event and invited friends and family of squadron members as well as the public to learn more about CAP. Cadet staff planned the event which included displays and presentations for guests and a promotions and awards formation.

Displays included Aerospace Education, Cadet Programs, Emergency Services, Drug Demand Reduction, and Color Guard. Cadets demonstrated Drill & Ceremonies and senior members conducted a questions and answers session with parents.

This was the largest open house in the five year history of the squadron. The guests were very engaged by the displays and presentations. The promotion formation was a busy one with twelve cadets earning a promotion this month (a new one month record) and the many awards that were presented. The next squadron open house will be planned for September after the new school year begins.



C/SMSgt Lange invited her friend Bethany, who is a US Navy Sea Scout, to learn more about CAP.



C/CMSgt Major and C/TSgt Calabrese present a DDR Display.



Guests interact with the displays.



C/CMSgt Belval set up a CAP flight simulator.

143rd Members Promote CAP at Oakville School

Members of the 143rd recently set up a CAP display at St. Mary Magdallen School (SMMS) in Oakville, CT. SMMS is a Catholic School with a program that includes pre-kindergarten through 8th grade. Several members of the squadron are students at SMMS and were invited to set up a CAP Display at the school's annual Carnival & Fund Raiser event.

Cadets created three large poster sized displays, one each describing Aerospace Education, Cadet Programs and Emergency Services. A laptop played videos taken from the capchannel page of CAP's national website. Photos of recent squadron events and CAP promotional items were also on display.

Six cadets and two senior members spent the afternoon talking to students and parents at the school about the opportunities available to CAP cadets.



2nd Lt Lisa Abassi and her daughter C/SrA Celine Abassi greet students in front of the display.



Cadets (1. to r.) C/CMSgt Matthew Belval, C/SMSgt Alec Beliveau, C/SMSgt Devin Moore and C/2nd Lt Drew Groszof attended the event.



C/Capt Midhat Mullai explains CAP to visitors.

143rd Members Attend NYWG Conference

Four members of the 143rd Composite Squadron attended the New York Wing Conference at the Fort William Henry Conference Center in Lake George, NY. Senior members Lt Col Levitt, Maj Litwinczyk and Maj Palys attended seminars and presentations by NYWG staff members on a wide range of CAP related topics. There were also many opportunities to meet CAP members from across NYWG.

C/Maj Maggie Palys participated in the cadet activities collectively known as the Cadet Fest.



C/Maj Maggie Palys (3rd from right) enjoys the banquet with her new friends from NYWG. C/Maj Palys was made an honorary member of NYWG's Finger Lakes Group for the weekend.



(l. to r.) Maj Joe Palys, Col Jack Ozer (NYWG Commander), Maj Tom Litwinczyk and Lt Col Rich Levitt.

Cadets are assigned roommates (3 or 4 to a room) for the weekend and participate in workshops, competitions and social activities.

The conference concluded with an awards banquet that included special award presentations, a presentation by the NYWG Cadet Honor Guard, a large dance floor with DJ music and an extravagant buffet dinner. After the banquet cadets gathered in the indoor pool area for party.



SpaceX Launches Falcon 9/ Dragon on Historic Mission

A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket thundered into space and delivered a Dragon cargo capsule into orbit on May 22, 2012. The launch began an ambitious mission to show that the company is ready to deliver cargo to the International Space Station.

"We're now back on the brink of a new future, a future that embraces the innovation the private sector brings to the table," said NASA Administrator Charles Bolden. "The significance of this day cannot be overstated. While there is a lot of work ahead to successfully complete this mission, we are off to a good start."

Working with an instantaneous launch window, SpaceX, short for Space Exploration Technologies of Hawthorne, Calif., proceeded through a flawless countdown. Liftoff from Space Launch Complex-40 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida came at 3:44 a.m. EDT, just as the station was crossing 249 miles above the North Atlantic.



The SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifts off from Space Launch Complex-40 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., to begin a demonstration flight. Photo credit: NASA TV

"Every bit of adrenaline in my body released at that moment," said Elon Musk about the moment the rocket lifted off the pad. Musk is the founder, CEO and chief designer of SpaceX. "People were really giving it their all. For us, it was like winning the Super Bowl."

The launch came three days after the rocket aborted a previous launch attempt. William Gerstenmaier, NASA's associate administrator for Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate, lauded the company for getting the craft ready for the successful launch.

"They stayed focused and kept moving forward," Gerstenmaier said. "Things are moving in the right direction."

Dragon is carrying about 1,200 pounds of supplies for the crew of the station and experiments designed by students. The spacecraft can hold 7,300 pounds of material for delivery to the station, but since this is a test flight, the manifest was limited to important but not critical materials. Food and clothing make up the bulk of the supplies.

The launch put the Dragon on a course to rendezvous with the space station in three days. A detailed series of navigation and other systems tests will be performed in space before the capsule is allowed to move close enough to the station for astronauts to grab it with the robot arm and connect it to the Earth-facing port of the Harmony module.

The tests include a careful approach to the station that calls for the spacecraft to pause several times. The space station crew also will show that they can communicate directly with the uncrewed Dragon capsule. If all the testing goes well, they will go ahead with the rendezvous and berthing.

"There's still a thousand things that have to go right, but we are looking forward to this exciting mission," said Alan Lindemoyer, manager of NASA's Commercial Crew and Cargo Program.

The Dragon will remain connected to the station for about three weeks, allowing astronauts to empty it before loading used scientific equipment inside for the return to Earth. Reversing the process of connecting the spacecraft to the station, astronauts will use the robotic arm to remove the Dragon capsule. The Dragon will then de-orbit and return to Earth under parachutes, splashing down in the Pacific Ocean off the California coast.

Steven Siceloff
NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center
-Taken from nasa.gov



The SpaceX Dragon capsule is lifted to be placed atop its cargo ring inside a processing hangar at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida. Image credit: NASA/Kim Shiflett Nov. 16, 2011

Republic P-47 Thunderbolt

Renowned for its ruggedness, firepower and speed, the massive Republic P-47 was one of the most famous and important USAAF fighters during World War II. Produced in larger numbers than any other U.S. fighter, the Thunderbolt -- affectionately nicknamed the "Jug" -- served as a bomber escort and as a very effective ground attack fighter.

The USAAF and several Allied nations used the P-47 in nearly every combat theater. Through 1943 in Europe, the P-47C and P-47D equipped the majority of 8th Air Force fighter groups in England (and one in the 15th Air Force in Italy) as a long-range escort fighter. But since they couldn't escort USAAF heavy bombers all the way to some targets, longer-ranged P-51 Mustangs gradually replaced them in the escort role (with the sole exception of the 56th Fighter Group). The rugged and heavily-armed P-47D proved to be ideal for ground attack, though, and it became the backbone of the fighter-bomber force in the 9th Air Force in western Europe and the 12th Air Force in southern Europe.

In the Pacific, several 5th Air Force fighter groups flew the P-47D against Japanese air and ground forces in New Guinea and the Philippines in 1943-1944. Later, five groups in the 7th Air Force (and, in the closing weeks of the war, the 20th Air Force) flew the much longer-ranged



Republic P-47N-5 three ship formation (S/N 44-88576, 88589, 88577). (U.S. Air Force photo)

P-47N as an escort fighter for B-29s against the Japanese homeland.

Many Allied countries also flew the P-47D in combat in WWII, including Brazil, Free France, Great Britain, Mexico and the Soviet Union.

Range continued to be a problem for the Thunderbolt until the introduction of the P-47N, which breathed new life into the P-47 design. The P-47N had a more powerful engine and introduced a new wing which, unlike the P-47D's, carried two 96-gallon internal fuel tanks. The P-47N was 40 mph faster and could fly over 800 miles farther than the P-47D.

P-47Ds and P-47Ns continued to serve in the USAAF (after 1947, the U.S. Air Force) as initial equipment for



Republic P-47D cockpit at the National Museum of the United States Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo)

SAC, TAC and ADC squadrons. In 1948 the Thunderbolt was redesignated the F-47. As more jet fighters came into the inventory, the USAF phased out the F-47 in 1949, but the Air National Guard continued to use it into the mid-1950s. Many countries in Latin America, along with Iran, Italy, Nationalist China, Turkey and Yugoslavia continued to operate the Thunderbolt, some into the 1960s.

Of the grand total of 15,683 P-47s built, approximately two-thirds reached operational commands overseas and 5,222 were lost in action, including 1,722 non-combat losses. In 1.35 million combat hours flown, the combat loss was less than 0.7 percent, an exceptionally low figure attesting to the strength of the aircraft.

-Taken from www.nationalmuseum.af.mil



ECSTASY

Know The Facts

What Is It?

"Ecstasy" is a slang term for MDMA, short for 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine, a name that's nearly as long as the all-night parties where MDMA is often used. That's why MDMA has been called a "club drug." It has effects similar to those of other stimulants, and it often makes the person feel like everyone is his or her friend, even when that's not the case.



MDMA is man-made—it doesn't come from a plant like marijuana does. Other chemicals or substances—such as caffeine, dextromethorphan (found in some cough syrups), amphetamines, PCP, or cocaine—are sometimes added to, or substituted for, MDMA in Ecstasy tablets. Makers of MDMA can add anything they want to the drug, so its purity is always in question.

What Are the Common Street Names?

There are a lot of slang words for MDMA. "Ecstasy" is one of the most common. You might also hear "E," "XTC," "X," "Adam," "hug," "beans," "clarity," "lover's speed," and "love drug."

How Is It Used?



Most people who abuse MDMA take a pill, tablet, or capsule. These pills can be different colors, and sometimes have cartoon-like images on them. Some people take more than one pill at a time, called "bumping."

How Many Teens Use It?

According to a 2011 NIDA-funded study, over the past 10 years smart young teens have turned their backs on MDMA. Since 2001, the percentage of 8th graders who have ever tried MDMA dropped from 5.2 percent in 2001 to 2.6 percent in 2011. The drop among 10th graders and 12th graders is similar. Between 2010 and 2011, further declines were seen in the abuse of MDMA by 8th graders. Past-year use decreased from 2.4 percent in 2010 to 1.7 percent in 2011.

Is MDMA Addictive?

Like other drugs, MDMA can be addictive for some people. That is, people continue to take the drug despite experiencing unpleasant physical side effects and other social, behavioral, and health consequences.

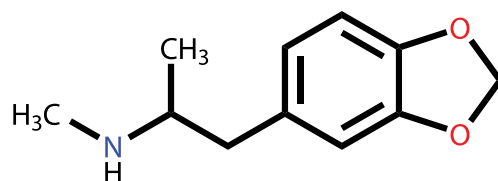
No one knows how many times a person can use a drug before becoming addicted or who's most vulnerable to addiction. As with other drugs of abuse, a person's genes, living environment, and other factors play a role in whether they are likely to become addicted to MDMA.

What Are the Common Effects?

For most people, a "hit" of MDMA lasts for 3 to 6 hours. Once the pill is swallowed, it takes only about 15 minutes for MDMA to enter the bloodstream and reach the brain. About 45 minutes later, the person experiences MDMA's "high." That's when the drug is at its peak level. People who use MDMA might feel very alert, or "hyper," at first. At clubs, they can keep on dancing for hours at a time. Some lose a sense of time and experience other changes in perception, such as an enhanced sense of touch. Others experience negative effects right away. They may become anxious and agitated. Sweating or chills may occur, and people may feel faint or dizzy.

MDMA can also cause muscle tension, nausea, blurred vision, and increased heart rate and blood pressure. Forceful clenching of the teeth can occur, and individuals at clubs have been known to chew on pacifiers to relieve some of the tension.

But it doesn't stop there. Even if a person takes only one pill, the side effects of MDMA—including feelings of sadness, anxiety, depression, and memory difficulties—can last for several days to a week (or longer in people who use MDMA regularly).



Dangers

People who use MDMA can become dehydrated through vigorous activity in a hot environment. It may not seem like a big deal, but when MDMA interferes with the body's ability to regulate its temperature, it can cause dangerous overheating, called hyperthermia. This, in turn, can lead to serious heart and kidney problems—or, rarely, death. MDMA can be extremely dangerous in high doses or when multiple small doses are taken within a short time period to maintain the high. High levels of the drug in the blood stream can increase the risk of seizures and affect the heart's ability to maintain its normal rhythms.

Risks to the Brain

Messages travel through our brains through nerve cells, or neurons. Researchers that study the brain think that MDMA may affect neurons that use serotonin to communicate with other neurons. The serotonin system plays a direct role in controlling our mood, aggression, sexual activity, sleep, and sensitivity to pain. Another bit of bad news—researchers have seen memory loss among regular users of MDMA.

Long-Term Effects

We still don't know whether MDMA causes long-term brain damage in humans, or whether the effects are reversible when someone stops using the drug. A study of animals showed that exposure to high doses of MDMA for 4 days produced brain damage that could still be seen 6 to 7 years later. The good news is that the researchers found that some of the nerve fibers grew back in the same places where the toxic reactions had occurred. But, we still don't know if these new neurons work like the old ones. It's like cutting off a branch of a fruit tree: The tree is still alive and can sprout a new limb near the site of the cut, but it may not bear as much fruit as the old one.

-Taken from teens.drugabuse.gov



DISTRACTED DRIVING

Frequently Asked Questions

Is distracted driving really a problem?

Distracted driving kills. The friends, family, and neighbors of the thousands of people killed each year in distracted driving crashes will tell you it is a very serious safety problem. The nearly half a million people injured each year will agree.

What is distracted driving?

Distraction occurs any time you take your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, and your mind off your primary task: driving safely. Any non-driving activity you engage in is a potential distraction and increases your risk of crashing.

I'm a pretty good driver. Can't some people text or talk on the phone and drive safely?

No, they can't. Research indicates that the burden of talking on a cell phone - even if it's hands-free - saps the brain of 39% of the energy it would ordinarily devote to safe driving. Using a cell phone while driving delays your reaction time as much as having a blood alcohol concentration of .08, the legal limit for drunk driving. Drivers who use a hand-held device are 4 times more likely to get into a crash serious enough to cause injury. Texting drivers are 23 times more likely to get involved in a crash.



If it's so dangerous, why do people do it?

Some people still don't know how dangerous distracted driving is. Others know about the risks of texting and talking while driving, but still choose to do so anyway. They make the mistake of thinking the statistics don't apply to them, that they can defy the odds. Still others simply lead busy, stressful lives and use cell phones and smartphones to stay connected with their families, friends, and workplaces. They forget or choose not to shut these devices off when they get behind the wheel.

Who are the most serious offenders?

Our youngest and most inexperienced drivers are most at risk, with 16% of all distracted driving crashes involving drivers under 20. But they are not alone. At any given moment during daylight hours, over 800,000 vehicles are being driven by someone using a hand-held cell phone.

Sending or reading one text is pretty quick, unlike a phone conversation - wouldn't that be okay?

Texting is the most alarming distraction because it involves manual, visual, and cognitive distraction simultaneously. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for 4.6 seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field, blindfolded. It's extraordinarily dangerous.

Is it safe to use a hands-free device to talk on a cell phone while driving?

So far, the research indicates that the cognitive distraction of having a hands-free phone conversation causes drivers to miss the important visual and audio cues that would ordinarily help you avoid a crash.

Why doesn't the U.S. Dept. of Transportation make distracted driving illegal?

Passenger car driving behavior falls under the jurisdiction of the individual states, so the U.S. DOT can't ban it. Congress has considered a number of good laws to prevent distracted driving, but unfortunately nothing has passed yet. However, many states have stepped up to pass tough laws against texting, talking on a cell phone, and other distractions. You can visit our State Laws page to learn about the laws in your state.

What else can DOT do to prevent distracted driving?

Even though we can't make texting or talking on a cell phone while driving illegal, we have been pretty busy. Please visit www.distraction.gov to learn more.

Safe Work for Young Workers

Safe work is rewarding work. Your employer has the responsibility to provide a safe workplace. Employers must follow all OSHA safety and health standards to prevent you from being injured or becoming ill on the job. If you are under age 18, there may be limits on the hours you work, the jobs you do and the equipment you use. Learn about the federal and state wage and hour child labor laws that apply to you.



You have the right to:

- Work in a safe place.
- Receive safety and health training in a language that you understand.
- Ask questions if you don't understand instructions or if something seems unsafe.
- Use and be trained on required safety gear, such as hard hats, goggles and ear plugs.
- Exercise your workplace safety rights without retaliation or discrimination.
- File a confidential complaint with OSHA if you believe there is a serious hazard or that your employer is not following OSHA standards.

Your employer must:

- Provide a workplace free from serious recognized hazards and follow all OSHA safety and health standards.
- Provide training about workplace hazards and required safety gear. Employers must pay for most safety gear.
- Tell you where to get answers to your safety or health questions.
- Tell you what to do if you get hurt on the job.

To help protect yourself, you can:

- Report unsafe conditions to a shift/team leader or supervisor.
- Wear any safety gear required to do your job.
- Follow the safety rules.
- Ask questions.
- Ask for help if needed.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is the agency of the Department of Labor (DOL) that protects workers from dangers on the job that can cause injuries or illnesses. OSHA is here to help you. Call us on our toll-free number: 1-800-321-OSHA (6742) to get answers to your questions, or to ask OSHA to inspect your workplace if you think there is a serious hazard. You can also submit a question online.